

NEW MUSIC CULTURAL CRISIS:

Musicians and Friends:

It is time to Claim what is our Right!

COME to TONIC

Saturday April 14th

FROM 11 a.m. until...

107 Norfolk Street

(between Delancey and Rivington)

WE MUST DEMAND:

AN ADEQUATE, AFFORDABLE SPACE, CENTRALLY LOCATED IN THE LES!

TONIC IS BEING HANDED OVER TO THE REALTORS.

WE ARE MAKING AN APPEAL TO THE CITY, TO EITHER
GIVE US THIS SPACE OR ONE COMPARABLE IN SIZE FOR
THE USE OF AVANTJAZZ/NEW MUSIC/INDIE COMMUNITY.

WE CAN NOT LOSE SUCH AN IMPORTANT HOME!

YOUR PRESENCE - YOUR MUSIC- YOUR VOICE - YOUR ART - IS ESSENTIAL.

SHOW THE CITY YOU CARE ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING.

DON'T LET REALTORS DECIDE NEW YORK CITY'S CULTURAL FATE!

STOP THE LOSS OF IMPORTANT VENUES, ONE BY ONE
FORCED TO CLOSE BY RENT INCREASES AT AN ALARMING
RATE.

STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF THE L.E.S. AS A CENTER OF
DIVERSE & VARIED & UNIQUE CULTURE.

Tonic is scheduled to close on Friday, April 13th, 2007.

On Saturday April 14th, the day after, we will
gather to fight the eviction of this crucial
venue, the diminishment of our livelihoods, and
the destruction of our culture by peacefully
resisting. Please join us.

The musicians - and their sizable audiences - are asking:

1. that the city council adopt a general principle similar to the "european cultural exception": that nyc's new music and experimental jazz/indie musical culture is a unique asset, an essential part of the city's history, economy, and identity, and not to be left entirely at the mercy of market forces.

2. that the city recognize the damage done to its cultural heritage and status as a 'cultural capitol' by the displacement of venues central to new music and experimental indie/jazz, and act now to protect those venues still left from displacement either through funding sufficient to allow them to withstand the explosion of commercial rents, or by legislation forcing landlords to restrict rents of culturally valuable venues, or both.

3. that new york city use its right of eminent domain to seize the space from which tonic has been evicted, turning its management over to a confederation composed of the musicians and activists who have worked in and supported the space up till now and other established non-profit new music presenters. That the city purchase the sound equipment currently in place in the club from the former owners, for the purpose of leaving it in place for future use.

They are calling on landlord William Gottlieb Inc, West Village based owner of over 75 properties to:

A) forgive tonic's 50,000 debt. forcing John and Melissa, former owners of tonic and parents of a one month old baby to pay this debt which means they will be forced to sell the club's sound system and other technical equipment. These assets were paid for by donations and

benefits put on by working musicians.

According to musicians and protest organizer marc ribot: "this money would be a drop in the bucket for William Gottlieb Inc., which controls well over 100 million in assets. it will be a serious loss to the community that fought to raise it."

B) donate the space now occupied by the club to a confederation of musicians non-profits committed to the continuity of one of the L.E.S.'s [Lower East Side] most important cultural centers.

For the last nine years Tonic has been at the center of NYC experimental music. When the tsunami of rent increases and mal-development engulfing the LES forces its closure, NYC will have lost the last avant-jazz/indie/new music club in Manhattan with a capacity over 90. A vibrant community of musicians and fans worked for years to maintain Tonic -- raising over 100,000 dollars through benefit concerts and donations to pay off debt, fund repairs, buy a sound system, and keep the club open in devastating times such as following 9/11/01.

We're taking action now to dramatize the market failure of which Tonic's closing is a symptom, and to ask that the city save this home for us or provide a minimum 200 capacity, centrally located venue for experimental jazz, indie, and new music.

We want for ourselves and the communities around us the right to stay around long enough to enjoy the culture we've created, not harassment and a bum's rush into eviction the minute real estate decides we've made the neighborhood 'safe' and 'cultured' enough for them to cash in.

This is where we tell the landlords, developers, and the city: Enough. Genucht. Basta ya!

Coming on the heels of the closing of CBGB's, Sin-e, Fez, The Continental, and numerous other varied downtown venues, the closing of Tonic represents the shutting down of NYC's most important live music experimental jazz, indie, and new music scene.

This wave of live music space closings constitutes a market failure. The downsized or geographically marginal venues arising in the wake of the established club closings are not generating enough to maintain the economic viability of this scene. If there is not immediate and sufficient PUBLIC INTERVENTION, either in the form of limiting rents, or supplying alternate space and funding - or both - New York City will lose an essential part of its heritage, culture, and economy.

"My band plays some of the biggest festivals in Europe...Meanwhile there's only one club I can play in New York and it's about to close."
Steven Bernstein, Trumpet player and leader of Sex Mob and the Millennial Territory Orchestra
(NY Times)

According to Patricia Nicholson Parker, organizer of the Vision Festival:
"We have come together to say we deserve a space and in essence, we have already paid for our space. Musicians contribute to the economy of this city every day with world class performances. In the case of Tonic, many musicians came together and invested in the space. Through benefits and organizing they raised significant sums of money (100+ grand) for the venue, Tonic. The city needs to acknowledge this. It is good for the city and good for the artists and their audiences that the city make available a musician-friendly community club/space which holds up to 200 audience members. It is important that it not be in the outer boroughs but be centrally located in the LES where this serious alternative music has been

birthed and where it can be easily accessed by audiences."

The Mostly Mozart festival is a wonderful experience for many new yorkers. However, it is neither an export nor the type of music representing New York City's musical cultural abroad. europeans can travel to Salzburg or Vienna to hear Mozart. New York's indigenous forms, however, are being presented every night of the year in cities throughout europe, asia and around the world. new music/experimental indie/jazz has support abroad completely disproportionate with its profile in nyc, as even a brief visit to <http://www.europejazz.net/> , the european jazz network website will confirm. And tourists from abroad can and do travel to new york to hear it in its local setting.

But all this depends on its having a local setting: including a viable new indie and experimental music nightly club scene. its not only culturally barbarous, but also incredibly short sighted economic policy that the internationally and critically recognized value of this music should be without an adequate, well advertised, and easily accessible showcase in its place of birth: one funded well enough to be able to both nurture new talent and present established musicians.

In addition...

OPEN LETTER to the Musicians, Staff, and Fans of Tonic - PLEASE READ!

When Tonic closes today [Friday 13th 2007], we will have a lost a great club, and the last avant jazz/indie/new music club in manhattan with a capacity of over 90,

presenting music on a nightly basis.

Tonic's closing is not an isolated event: Coming on the heels of the closing of CBGB's, Sine, The Fez, the Continental, this wave of club closings, downsizings, and displacements to Brooklyn constitutes a market failure.

But we don't have to accept the diminishment of our musical culture. We're organizing a response, and we intend to fight for the viability of new music/ indie/experimental jazz traditionally based in the LES. We don't intend to let Tonic's eviction pass without making some serious noise.

We hope you'll join us at Tonic on Saturday 14th April starting at 11 AM. If you'd like to help out or be kept informed of upcoming events, please sign up for the mailing list by sending an email to:

indy_music_action-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

and if you just want to keep up to date with what we're planning, you should go to:

<http://www.takeittothebridge.com>

We are an ad hoc coalition of musicians and audience/supporters of new/ experimental jazz/indie music. We represent a racially and culturally diverse community united in our desire to preserve the cultural legacy and future viability of the progressive jazz, experimental rock, and new music historically based in the LES.

Thank you,
Marc Ribot